Statewide Professional Learning Community: Teacher and Student Voices What is making the difference for Utah students?

FOCUS: This electronic journal is a way to highlight the impact of the Utah Core Standards on teachers who are changing their instruction so that student learning and academic challenge are at the CENTER of all adult collaborative efforts. These collaborative efforts shape a Statewide Professional Learning Community is OPEN to all and includes the Utah State Office of Education, every school district and charter LEA, each school and classroom in ALL eight regions of Utah, from Bear Lake to Monument Valley. The PROFESSION of teaching is based on our capacity to learn with each other for the purpose of benefitting ALL Utah students, their families and communities.

Volume 2: In Volume 2 secondary teachers in grades 6-12 continue to write about how they are adjusting their instruction to support all students in achieving the more rigorous Utah Core Standards.

Theme: Students Responding to Increased Rigor and Clear Expectations

Email reflection in response to the question: How has your changed instruction supported your students?

I have changed the way I teach English because I see a need to teach more informational text. Students seem to be lacking the experience of studying real world subjects that are deep and meaningful on their own time. Very few students read the newspaper in print or on the Internet. Many science and history topics are covered in the news and students need more time reading in those subject areas. It is helpful to their comprehension for me to teach vocabulary that is specific to informational text. I am seeing that students really enjoy studying these current topics and a lot of insightful discussion has stemmed from studying informational text.

I am also seeing that they are learning to study challenging, nonfiction text in my English curriculum that supports science and history. I like the emphasis that the Utah Core has in dovetailing the core subjects more. The Utah Core will be shifting away from literary text, somewhat, and tackling more informational text in the English curriculum, but I see many benefits from having more of a balance.

I am not only teaching these students for themselves, but for the future parents that they will become. I want my students today to be smart and capable---to teach and guide their own children in the future.

Ann Hartvigsen, Fremont High School, English/Journalism Department

Excerpt from Written Application – USOE Approved National Facilitator, Response to "Commitment to collaborative work and adjusting instruction:"

The experience that had the most impact on my learning was the argument writing techniques I used while teaching my learning strategies class. I found the examples of class discussions included in the book to be very useful. Conducting a meaningful discussion with my own classes was more difficult than I had anticipated. Students wanted the answers to be easy. They didn't realize how difficult it can be to attach a definition to something, like death for example. On the other hand, I found my students to very engaged in the subject matter. I know that they could see real life, relevant connections, For example, deciding criteria for an award made them really have to think and provide evidence when it came time to decide the deserving recipient. We went through most of the activities in the book. At the end of the term, I asked the students to write in their journals about what they had learned. All of them responded positively to the learning experience. They really loved the crime scene activity where they had to determine the murderer or whether or not the witness was telling the truth. They loved the discussions, the debate, and the empowerment they felt in determining the "rules". I look forward to teaching Hillock's "Teaching Argument Writing" again. I hope to be better on my second time around.

- Lesia Dalton, Sixth Grade Teacher, USOE National Facilitator, South Sevier School District

Excerpt from Written Application – USOE Approved National Facilitator, Response to "Commitment to collaborative work and adjusting instruction:"

I have been able to develop and use new assessments with my own students, collected that work, received feedback and the adjusted my curriculum. I have been working to adjust my curriculum to include more constructed response and performance tasks. As school began this fall, I discovered that that my group of seventh grade students included many students who were more than two grade levels behind with their reading and writing. This presented an enormous challenges and I wondered if I really did have a tool belt and the strategies to help these students. As we began practicing skills such

as doing a close reading, writing short construction responses, my students rose to the challenge. Much of what I learned from being a state facilitator was now being put into practice and I was willing to try what I had learned from other great teachers. I think my learner has helped these students. In a fall pre assessment 30 percent of them were writing argument at a proficient level and we are now at 55 percent writing proficient. That number is not where is should be but if I look at each students all them made at least two grade level gains with their writing. If I had not had the experience of being a state facilitator or in participating in the Saturday sessions where I could learn from many outstanding teachers and get feedback, I am not sure I could have met this challenge.

- Leann Moody, Middle School Teacher, USOE National Facilitator, Provo School District

Excerpt from Written Application – USOE Approved National Facilitator, Response to "Commitment to collaborative work and adjusting instruction:"

Although all the items on the above list have been helpful to me, the most powerful have been those that make up the process of developing, using, and revising performance tasks for my students. Throughout this school year, I have been adjusting my curriculum to address the strands of the Utah Core. Since this means I am trying many new tasks with my students, having the opportunity to share those with other teachers and receive their feedback is invaluable. The Professional Learning Community (PLC) in which I am involved at my school provides many opportunities for developing, reviewing, and revising performance tasks. Each week, we work together to create activities that allow our students to display what they have learned. This school year we have been focusing on reworking our lessons and activities to address the Utah Core. One area we addressed was the change from persuasive writing to argumentative. Using Hillocks' ideas, as well as our own, we created lesson ideas, performance tasks, and assessments to ensure that our students understood the new concepts. After the students completed the tasks, our PLC reviewed and discussed their work. We then revised our lessons and performance tasks to better address our students' needs. This collaborative process has been incredibly helpful in this first year with the Utah Core. In addition to collaborating with teachers from my own department, I have also worked with colleagues during the Saturday Sessions at the USOE. Recently, I brought an assessment activity I created to gauge the students' understanding of the standards on the reading strand of the Utah Core. Using a feedback protocol, I received helpful advice about how to revise the assessment to work better for my students. Taking that feedback, I reworked the assessment and have since used the revised version with my classes. Again, the collaboration with supportive colleagues has been beneficial both for

me and for my students. Each time I work with other educators, I become a better teacher, and I am grateful for the opportunity.

 Kristin Van Brunt, High School English, USOE National Facilitator, Davis School District

Excerpt from Written Application – USOE Approved National Facilitator, Response to "Commitment to collaborative work and adjusting instruction:"

The Saturday Seminars have had the biggest impact on my learning. At the summer core academies, one of the most commonly voiced participant concerns dealt with what would really be covered in the assessments. Teachers were afraid that we would have less time to teach our students because we would need to "teach to" a meaningless, high-stakes test. At the Saturday Seminars, we went through the sample assessment materials, and I was relieved to see that by preparing students to be successful at meeting the standards, I will be teaching students how to be successful readers, writers and thinkers. As an English teacher, that is exactly what I want for my students. When I created performance tasks for the new Utah Core Standards, I found that I was creating high-quality lesson plans. I was not wasting time "teaching to" a test; I was focusing on good teaching. I have been able to share sample performance tasks in my PLC and department meetings, and this has helped my colleagues see how they may create their own lessons in a way that will help prepare students for success in both the assessments and in mastering vital English skills. I have also used the depth-of knowledge/cognitive rigor matrix in PLC and English department meetings to examine our assignments and to highlight the areas in which we need to adjust our instruction and increase higher-level thinking and learning in our classrooms. The Saturday Seminars have taught me that the student performance as assessment can be a useful teaching tool rather than a burdensome waste of time.

Terry Krieger-James, RAISE (Reading Apprenticeship Consultant in Training), USOE
 National Facilitator, Nebo School District

Excerpt from Written Application – USOE Approved National Facilitator, Response to "Commitment to collaborative work and adjusting instruction:"

The Saturday Seminars and the work with the Flex Books have had the most impact on my teaching. In the Saturday Seminars we have learned protocols to use with adults that I have been able to use with my teams here at the school and with other teachers with whom I am working. This has helped me facilitate in these sessions and they have been productive and helpful. These protocols have also helped me work with parents. Often, when parents come to talk with teachers, they have an issue that needs to be dealt with. I have found that when I apply the principles I learned in the protocols and through the practice we have had I am better able to come to common ground with the parents and come to a resolution where we can work as a team for the benefit of the student. The seminars have also given me an opportunity to network once again with colleagues and refine some of the work I have done with my students. This also helps me plan for future work with these students and for refining my units. The work on the Flex Books has helped me focus on the performance tasks the students will have to complete for the future testing and also given me practice finding quality non-fiction pieces to use with my students and then design tasks for the students to complete that are aligned with the DOK (Depth of Knowledge) appropriate to the task and that will help my students stretch. This information has also helped me when discussing plans for the coming year with other colleagues and with my principal as we plan for the changes we need to make as a school to better serve our students. This has given me the vocabulary I need to be more articulate with other professionals and also with the parents of my students to help them understand why we are doing the work we are and what the end goal is for the students. This work has also helped me evaluate the things I do with my students in my classroom. I am more skilled at designing units that help the students practice those skills they will need to be more successful in future job and college opportunities. It has also reminded me of the importance of staying informed on current issues and in being more diverse in my personal reading. This will help me find the materials my students need to practice their skills in my classroom and for the assessments they will be taking.

 Paula Landeen, Middle School Special Education Teacher and Content Literacy, USOE National Facilitator, Jordan School District

Using Cognitive Rigor Matrix - FlexBook Sample Student Performance Task: Grades 9-10

What exactly do "fewer, clearer, and higher standards" really look like in the classroom? Using a cognitive rigor matrix to analyze curriculum, plan lessons, and implement assessments

Karin K. Hess, Dennis Carlock, Ben Jones, and John R. Walkup (Permission to reproduce is given when authorship is fully cited)

Abstract

With the ever-increasing call for more rigorous curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the United States, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State

School Officers are aiming to define the rigorous skills and knowledge that students need in order to succeed academically in college-entry courses and in workforce training programs (Glod, 2009). The proposed Common Core Standards will require high-level cognitive demand, such as asking students to demonstrate deep conceptual understanding through the application of content knowledge and skills to new situations. Using two widely accepted measures of describing cognitive rigor — Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

and Webb's Depth-of-Knowledge Levels — this article defines cognitive rigor and presents a matrix that integrates these models as a strategy for analyzing instruction and influencing teacher lesson planning. Using Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix (CRM), a density plot illustrates how the preponderance of curricular items (e.g., assignment questions and problem solving tasks) might align to cells in the matrix. Research results applying the matrix in two states' large-scale collection of student work samples are presented, along with a discussion of implications for curriculum planning in order to cultivate twenty-first century skills.

Bloom's Revised	Webb's Depth-of-Knowledge (DOK) Levels			
Taxonomy of Cognitive Process	Level 1 Recall & Reproduction	Level 2 Skills & Concepts	Level 3 Strategic Thinking/	Level 4 Extended Thinking
Remember Retrieve knowledge from long-term memory, recognize, recall, locate, identify	Recall, recognize, or locate basic facts, ideas, principles Recall or identify conversions: between representations, numbers, or units of measure Identify facts/details in texts	Omino di Goneopto		
Understand Construct meaning, clarify, paraphrase, represent, translate, illustrate, give examples, classify, categorize, summarize, generalize, infer a logical conclusion (such as from examples given), predict,	Compose & decompose numbers Evaluate an expression Locate points (grid/, number line) Represent math relationships in words pictures, or symbols Write simple sentences Select appropriate word for intended meaning	Specify and explain relationships Give non-examples/examp les Make and record observations Take notes; organize	Explain, generalize, or connect ideas using supporting evidence Explain thinking when more than one response is possible Explain phenomena in terms of	Explain how concepts or ideas specifically relate to other content domains or concepts Develop generalizations of the results obtained or strategies used and apply them to new
Apply Carry out or use a procedure in a given situation; carry out (apply to a familiar task), or use (apply) to an unfamiliar task	Follow simple/routine procedure (recipe-type directions) Solve a one-step problem Calculate, measure, apply a rule Apply an algorithm or formula (area, perimeter, etc.) Represent in words or diagrams a concept or relationship Apply rules or use resources to	Select a procedure according to task needed and perform it Solve routine problem applying multiple concepts or decision points Retrieve information from a table, graph, or figure and use it	Use concepts to solve non-routine problems Design investigation for a specific purpose or research question Conduct a designed investigation Apply concepts to solve non-routine	Select or devise an approach among many alternatives to solve a novel problem Conduct a project that specifies a problem, identifies solution paths, solves the problem, and reports results
Analyze Break into constituent parts, determine how parts relate, differentiate between relevant- irrelevant, distinguish, focus, select, organize, outline, find coherence, deconstruct (e.g., for bias or point of view)	Retrieve information from a table or graph to answer a question Identify or locate specific information contained in maps, charts, tables, graphs, or diagrams	Categorize, classify materials Compare/ contrast figures or data Select appropriate display data Organize or interpret (simple) data Extend a	Compare information within or across data sets or texts Analyze and draw conclusions from more complex data Generalize a pattern Organize/interpret	Analyze multiple sources of evidence or multiple works by the same author, or across genres, or time periods Analyze complex/abstract themes Gather, analyze, and organize
Evaluate Make judgments based on criteria, check, detect inconsistencies or fallacies, judge, critique			Cite evidence and develop a logical argument for concepts Describe, compare, and contrast solution	Gather, analyze, & evaluate relevancy & accuracy Draw & justify
Create Reorganize elements into new patterns/structures, generate, hypothesize, design, plan, construct, produce	Brainstorm ideas, concepts, or perspectives related to a topic or concept	Generate conjectures or hypotheses based on observations or prior knowledge	Synthesize information within one source or text Formulate an original problem, given a situation	Synthesize information across multiple sources or texts Design a model to inform and solve a real- world, complex, or

1.0 SAMPLE LEARNING TASKS WITH A TEXT SET DEISGNED FOR INCREASED COGNITIVE RIGOR: Grades 9-10

Addresses the following Standards:

- 1.1 READING: Key Ideas and Details: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- 1.2 WRITING: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- 1.3 SPEAKING AND LISTENING: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

2.0 TEXT ONE: Appendix B in the Utah Common Core State Standards: Informational Text Exemplars for Grades 9-10

Ronald Reagan. "Address to Students at Moscow University." The American Reader: Words that Moved a Nation, 2nd edition, edited by Diane Ravitch. New York: Harper Collins, 2000. (1988)

The explorers of the modern era are the entrepreneurs, men with vision, with the courage to take risks and faith enough to brave the unknown. These entrepreneurs and their small enterprises are responsible for almost all the economic growth in the United State. They are the prime movers of the technological revolution. In fact, one of the largest personal computer firms in the United States was started by two college students, no older than you, in the garage behind their home. Some people, even in my own country, look at the riot of experiment that is the free market and see only waste. What of all the entrepreneurs that fail? Well, many do, particularly the successful ones; often several times. And if you ask them the secret of their success, they'll tell you it's all that they learned in their struggles along the way; yes, it's what they learned from failing. Like an athlete or a scholar in pursuit of the truth, experience is the greatest teacher.

3.0 Learning Task: Analysis DOK 3

- 3.1 After doing a close reading of the excerpt from Reagan's 1988 speech, decide what claim Reagan is making.
- 3.2 Talk with the person next to you and be ready to cite the explicit textual evidence from the speech that supports **your** conclusion. AND why you selected this particular evidence! Listen carefully to your partner's selection of evidence and the rationale for selection.

4.0 TEXT TWO: Steve Jobs 2005 Commencement Address at Stanford University

Watch it on You Tube and follow the script: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UF8uR6Z6KLc

I am honored to be with you today at your commencement from one of the finest universities in the world. I never graduated from college. Truth be told, this is the closest I've ever gotten to a college graduation. Today I want to tell you three stories from my life. That's it. No big deal. Just three stories.

The first story is about connecting the dots.

I dropped out of Reed College after the first 6 months, but then stayed around as a drop-in for another 18 months or so before I really guit. So why did I drop out?

It started before I was born. My biological mother was a young, unwed college graduate student, and she decided to put me up for adoption. She felt very strongly that I should be adopted by college graduates, so everything was all set for me to be adopted at birth by a lawyer and his wife. Except that when I popped out they decided at the last minute that they really wanted a girl. So my parents, who were on a waiting list, got a call in the middle of the night asking: "We have an unexpected baby boy; do you want him?" They said: "Of course." My biological mother later found out that my mother had never graduated from college and that my father had never graduated from high school. She refused to sign the final adoption papers. She only relented a few months later when my parents promised that I would someday go to college.

And 17 years later I did go to college. But I naively chose a college that was almost as expensive as Stanford, and all of my working-class parents' savings were being spent on my college tuition. After six months, I couldn't see the value in it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out. And here I was spending all of the money my parents had saved their entire life. So I decided to drop out and trust that it would all work out OK. It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required classes that didn't interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked interesting.

It wasn't all romantic. I didn't have a dorm room, so I slept on the floor in friends' rooms, I returned coke bottles for the 5¢ deposits to buy food with, and I would walk the 7 miles across town every Sunday night to get one good meal a week at the Hare Krishna temple. I loved it. And much of what I stumbled into by following my curiosity and intuition turned out to be priceless later on. Let me give you one example:

Reed College at that time offered perhaps the best calligraphy instruction in the country. Throughout the campus every poster, every label on every drawer, was beautifully hand calligraphed. Because I had dropped out and didn't have to take the normal classes, I decided to take a calligraphy class to learn how to do this. I

learned about serif and san serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, about what makes great typography great. It was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can't capture, and I found it fascinating.

None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life. But ten years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer, it all came back to me. And we designed it all into the Mac. It was the first computer with beautiful typography. If I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts. And since Windows just copied the Mac, it's likely that no personal computer would have them. If I had never dropped out, I would have never dropped in on this calligraphy class, and personal computers might not have the wonderful typography that they do. Of course it was impossible to connect the dots looking forward when I was in college. But it was very, very clear looking backwards ten years later.

Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something — your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.

My second story is about love and loss.

I was lucky — I found what I loved to do early in life. Woz and I started Apple in my parents garage when I was 20. We worked hard, and in 10 years Apple had grown from just the two of us in a garage into a \$2 billion company with over 4000 employees. We had just released our finest creation — the Macintosh — a year earlier, and I had just turned 30. And then I got fired. How can you get fired from a company you started? Well, as Apple grew we hired someone who I thought was very talented to run the company with me, and for the first year or so things went well. But then our visions of the future began to diverge and eventually we had a falling out. When we did, our Board of Directors sided with him. So at 30 I was out. And very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating.

I really didn't know what to do for a few months. I felt that I had let the previous generation of entrepreneurs down - that I had dropped the baton as it was being passed to me. I met with David Packard and Bob Noyce and tried to apologize for screwing up so badly. I was a very public failure, and I even thought about running away from the valley. But something slowly began to dawn on me — I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. And so I decided to start over.

I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.

During the next five years, I started a company named NeXT, another company named Pixar, and fell in love with an amazing woman who would become my wife. Pixar went on to create the worlds first computer animated feature film, *Toy Story*, and is now the most successful animation studio in the world. In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought NeXT, I returned to Apple, and the technology we developed at NeXT is at the heart of Apple's current renaissance. And Laurene and I have a wonderful family together.

I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don't settle.

My third story is about death.

When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "No" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything — all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure - these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

About a year ago I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a scan at 7:30 in the morning, and it clearly showed a tumor on my pancreas. I didn't even know what a pancreas was. The doctors told me this was almost certainly a type of cancer that is incurable, and that I should expect to live no longer than three to six months. My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor's code for prepare to die. It means

to try to tell your kids everything you thought you'd have the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months. It means to make sure everything is buttoned up so that it will be as easy as possible for your family. It means to say your goodbyes.

I lived with that diagnosis all day. Later that evening I had a biopsy, where they stuck an endoscope down my throat, through my stomach and into my intestines, put a needle into my pancreas and got a few cells from the tumor. I was sedated, but my wife, who was there, told me that when they viewed the cells under a microscope the doctors started crying because it turned out to be a very rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. I had the surgery and I'm fine now.

This was the closest I've been to facing death, and I hope it's the closest I get for a few more decades. Having lived through it, I can now say this to you with a bit more certainty than when death was a useful but purely intellectual concept:

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma — which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.

When I was young, there was an amazing publication called *The Whole Earth Catalog*, which was one of the bibles of my generation. It was created by a fellow named Stewart Brand not far from here in Menlo Park, and he brought it to life with his poetic touch. This was in the late 1960's, before personal computers and desktop publishing, so it was all made with typewriters, scissors, and polaroid cameras. It was sort of like Google in paperback form, 35 years before Google came along: it was idealistic, and overflowing with neat tools and great notions.

Stewart and his team put out several issues of *The Whole Earth Catalog*, and then when it had run its course, they put out a final issue. It was the mid-1970s, and I was your age. On the back cover of their final issue was a photograph of an early morning country road, the kind you might find yourself hitchhiking on if you were so adventurous. Beneath it were the words: "Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish." It was their farewell message as they

signed off. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. And I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish that for you. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. Thank you all very much.

5.0 Learning Task: Analysis (DOK 3)

- **5.1** How is Jobs speech both LIKE and UNLIKE Reagan's claim? Using textual evidence from Jobs, use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast Reagan's and Jobs' speeches.
- 5.2 Which of these responses BEST captures the similarities in Reagan and Jobs viewpoints (more than one answer can be used by citing textual evidence).
- 5.2.1 Experience is the best teacher
- 5.2.2 Failure is necessary for success
- 5.2.3 Only go to classes or do projects that interest you
- 5.2.4 Technology is the most important economic revolution
- 5.3 WRITING PROMPT: You are speaking to business leaders who wish to donate money for technology to your school so that every student will have an iPad. Explain your reasons for selecting the BEST response that captures the similarities in Reagan's and Jobs' viewpoints. Use specific evidence from both texts that explain your selection. (Rubric included after Learning Task 6)
- **6.0 Learning Task (DOK 4):** Application and Extension: Considering the current economic conditions of 2012 what evidence could you use to support Reagan's claim for economic growth? What evidence could you use to support Jobs' claim for economic growth? What evidence could you use to develop a counterclaim? Or an alternative view to either Reagan or Jobs or BOTH!

Writing Scoring Guide – Three Point Rubric

3	The response provides the essential elements of a complete interpretation of the prompt. It addresses important aspects of the task and provides sufficient relevant evidence to support development. It is focused and organized, addressing the needs of purpose, audience and task. It includes sentences of varied length and structure.
2	The response provides some of the elements of an interpretation of the prompt. It addresses some aspects of the task and provides some evidence to support development. It has a focus but lacks strong organization and inconsistently addresses the needs of purpose, audience and task. It includes sentences of somewhat varied length and structure.
1	The response provides minimal elements of an interpretation of the prompt. It addresses few aspects of the task and provides little relevant evidence to support development. It lacks focus and organization and generally fails to address the needs of purpose, audience, and task. It includes sentences with little variety and structure.
0	The response does not meet any criteria.

Commentary and Connections: Powerful Learning for Adults and Using FlexBooks as an Open Education Digital Resource

- Christelle Estrada, Secondary English Specialist, USOE

Teams of dedicated Utah teachers have worked this year in Saturday Seminars to challenge themselves, learning together to:

- 1. produce powerful student performance tasks and use them with their students,
- 2. bring student work back from the assessment to examine it thoughtfully with colleagues, using a variety of collaborative protocols; and,
- 3. use the feedback from colleagues to redesign their instruction and performance tasks.

Based on their learning in the fall of 2011, they then re-organized themselves in teams to assess informational texts based on a Utah Text Complexity Rubric and then develop Open Educational Resources for teachers. These FlexBooks will be available in June at the CK-12 website http://www.ck12.org/flexbook/ and are free and available to anyone.

How to use FlexBooks

The students' edition will include a wide range of complex Open Source texts by grade bands and relevant student learning tasks: six through eight; nine through ten; and eleven through twelve. The purpose of the FlexBook is to ensure that teachers and students have access to a wide range of texts. For the 2012-2013 academic year, this edition is focusing on INFORMATIONAL and LITERARY NON-FICTION. FlexBooks are a supplemental DIGITAL resource that will be developed and expanded each year.

- FlexBooks are NOT intended to take the place of novels or other literary genres that are taught at each grade level based on local district and school resources and criteria.
- FlexBooks are NOT curriculum.
- FlexBooks DO NOT align to any English course or take the place of a textbook used in schools for literary texts.

The Teacher's Edition includes added resources to better support educators as they analyze their current instructional lesson design and adjust teaching to the expectations

for more rigorous standards of student performance and cognitive rigor based on the learning needs of the students.

Teachers can use whatever is helpful for them in designing the kind of instruction that will increase each student's capacity to read increasingly complex texts and apply that understanding to writing, specifically argument and expository writing.

The appendices include the following:

Appendix A: The Cognitive Rigor Matrix and samples of constructed response prompts to show the depth of knowledge level and rubrics for students and teachers to assess argument writing in the Utah Core standards.

Appendix B: A clear explanation of text complexity and rubrics to support teachers in assessing both quantitative and qualitative criteria for text complexity. Other tools will focus on "Knowing the Student as a Reader," better understanding the needs of a wide range of students.

JOIN US FOR SATURDAY SEMINARS NEXT YEAR

Each Seminar will include two Saturdays: one in October and one in February.

Each Seminar will be limited to 15 participants.

You can sign up as a team from grades 6-12.

Your team will be co-facilitated by two USOE approved facilitators who attended Saturday Seminars last year and were authors of the FlexBooks.

If interested email soon to: Christelle.estrada@schools.utah.gov

NEXT EDITION – September 1st:

Highlights from Adult Learning that Matters: How Utah teachers are making a difference for Utah students

Recruit your colleagues to the UEN Distribution List and the

Making a Difference e-journal